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PECULIARITIES OF VERB-POSITION IN GRIMMELSHAUSEN

Grimmelshausen lived in an important period in the development of New High German. The value of a study of the position of the verb in a prose work of this date is obvious. The "Simplicianische Schriften" are an example of narrative prose written in a very simple straightforward style. Peculiarities of verb-position are, therefore, all the more significant. The results given in this article are based upon a careful examination of the works of Grimmelshausen as contained in the three volumes of the "Deutsche National-Litteratur," edited by Felix Bobertag.

The possible verb-positions are four:

Type I. Verb in the second position.

Type II. Verb in the first position.

Type III. Verb in the final position.

Type IV. Verb in the "middle" position.

By "middle"¹ position is meant any deviation from Types I or III. A careful study of Types I and II in Grimmelshausen reveals only minor differences.

Turning our attention to Type III. At the present day this is the regular order for dependent clauses, but may not be used for independent clauses, except when the sentence consists only of subject and bare predicate. Two peculiarities occur in Grimmelshausen. (1) The verb in the final position after *denn*. *Denn* is today a coordinate conjunction, and does not affect the order of a clause. In Grimmelshausen I have found twenty-two cases where *denn* is followed by the dependent verb-position, including in this number two cases where the verb is omitted altogether, since it would naturally be dropped only when the author considered it to be at the end.

¹ For this term, cf. *W. Braune, Zur Lehre von der deutschen Wortstellung. In Forsch. z. d. Philologie. 1894. pp. 34 ff. A. Schultze. Die Stellung des Verbs bei Martin Opitz, Diss. Halle a. d. S. 1903.*

Ex.: Heiligen ohn göttliche Verhängnus, . . . mehrers habe ich nicht verstanden, *dann* seine Naherung ein solch Grausen und Schröcken in mir *erregte*, dass ich dess Amts meiner Sinne beraubt ward. . .

(2) Clauses expressing a proportion are now usually introduced by *je* — *desto*; *je* — *um so* (*um desto*); or rarely, *je* — *je*. The verb in the principal proposition is normally in the *second position*, i. e. immediately after the introductory particle. In Gr. we find five cases where the verb is in the final position in both the subordinate clause and the principle proposition, thus accentuating the parallelism.²

Ex.: “Je mehr ich nun schnarchte, je wachtsamer sie sich *erzeigten*, sie stiessen die Köpfe zusammen und fingen an, um die Wette zu rathen, wer ich doch seyn mögte?”

Type IV. Verb in the “Middle” Position. Our concern here is with dependent clauses. The verb is in the middle position in a dependent clause when it is anywhere in the sentence except at the end. The two most important things to consider in this connection are:—(1) By what other sentence constituent or constituents is the verb removed from its final position, and, (2) how frequently does Gr. employ the middle position in the various classes of dependent clauses. It should be noted that there are some cases which admit of classification under either Type III or IV. The doubt arises in long sentences where several subjects (rarely), objects, verbal nouns or other sentence modifiers *follow* the main verb instead of preceding it as they should theoretically do. The question is always open:—Is the verb to be considered at the end of its clause?

Ex.: “Wäre aber alles so hart eingewurzelt, dass diese sämtliche Artzneyen auch nicht anschlagen wolten, also dass der Patient allbereit den Namen *trüge* eines groben Esels- oder Haasenkopfs, eines Stockfisches, Bachanten, eines Saumagens, eines Kornhammers oder gar eines Narren, der den Kopf so voller Würm, . . .”

Similarly, such cases as the following admit really of either classification, depending on the point of view:—“Und gleichwie ichs *machte* mit den Partheyen zu Fuss, also thät ich ihm auch, wann ich zu Pferd draussen war.”

² Cf. *Curme, A Grammar of the German Language.* p. 618. d.

In the tables and estimates which follow allowance may be made for this variation in individual opinion. It is obvious, also, that many cases of so-called "middle" position are normal and correct at the present time, e. g. Wenn er *hätte* gehen können.

The verbs most commonly found in the middle position are the three auxiliaries, *haben*, *sein* and *werden* and all the modal auxiliaries. Where there is only one word following the verb (either an infinitive or past participle most commonly) various other verbs are found in the middle position. Taking up the verbal nouns first, we find the verb followed by:—an infinitive; past participle; two infinitives; three infinitives; past participle and infinitive; two past participles.

Secondly, the verb may stand between verbal nouns. Here are exemplified:—Past participle, verb, infinitive; past participle, verb, past participle; infinitive, verb, infinitive. Compare in this connection the position of the verb in the following examples with reference to the prefix. (This is rare in Gr.; cf. also Schultze op. cit. § 108)

“Wann ich aber wegen üblen Wetters in Wäldern und Feldern nicht herum *konte* schwermen.”

“dieselbe brachte ich dem Obristen und erhielt dadurch nicht allein einen Thaler zur Verehrung, sondern auch Erlaubnüß, dass ich hinaus *dorffte* gehen, den Hasen nachzustellen, wann ich die Wacht nicht hätte.”

More rarely, the verb is followed by other sentence-constituents:—Noun, as object; noun, as subject. One example:—“wie sagt dann Gott zum Job, dass sich *erfreueten* alle Kinder Gottes, da doch bey den Verdammten kein Lob Gottes ist?”

For an example of another modifier compare the following:—“du verurtheilest und hörest keine Parthey, also dass du uns *tödest* ohn Urtheil und *begräbest* uns ohn Sterben!”³

(2) In the table given below are found the numbers and percentages of the various classes of dependent clauses for both final and middle position. Side by side with these are

³ The few rimed couplets which are found in Gr. show very free order with respect to the position of the verb in dependent clauses. Cf. Schultze, op. cit., passim.

given the figures for the works of Opitz (both prose and poetry) as compiled by Schultze, for the same kinds of clauses, so far as the two classifications coincide. Obviously the percentages only are of value in comparing Gr. and O., for the works studied varied both in amount and style. The difference between poetry and prose in O. is very significant. Note especially that in conditional and concessive clauses in *poetry* more verbs were in the *middle* position than in the *final*. Of course allowance must be made for some difference of opinion in classifying certain doubtful cases, but the total results obtained must give us a fair ratio.

	Grimmelshausen				Opitz				Opitz			
	S. Vol. I Percent.				Prose Percent.				Poetry Percent.			
	End	Mid.	End	Mid.	End	Mid.	End	Mid.	End	Mid.	End	Mid.
Relative	1768	62	96	4	461	57	89	11	389	274	59	41
Temporal	769	14	98	2	47	15	75	25	110	84	56	44
<i>Dass</i>	1253	62	95	5	149	25	85	15	107	88	55	45
Concessive	139	5	96	4	45	6	88	12	20	21	49	51
Conditional	293	22	93	7	71	9	88	12	37	38	49	51
Causal	780	12	98	2	51	4	93	7	52	40	56	44
Comparative	394	26	93	7	93	9	91	9	49	32	60	40
Indirect Quest.	414	17	98	2	17	5	77	23	28	19	59	41
Spatial	97	0	100	0	Not given							
Purpose	117	3	97	3	Not given							
Totals	6024	223	96	4	934	130	87	13	792	596	57	43

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